REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated October 3, 2003, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration based on the above claim amendment and the following remarks. Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as presented are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-29 were rejected in the office action. Claim 28 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 15, and 26 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found within claim 1 ("identifying said service node (SN) as adapted to connect said at least one other telephone station with the first telephone station in accordance with said call schedules"). Additional support can be found, for example, in the claims as filed, in Figure 2, and (with respect to claim 1) in the specification on page 6 lines 7-10, page 8 lines 24-25, and page 8 line 31 through page 9 line 6. Upon entry of this response, claims 1-27 and 29 will remain pending in the application. No new matter has been added, and no additional prior art searches are required.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,848,132 to Morley et al. ("Morley"). Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1-29 are distinguished over the teachings of Morley for the reasons given below.

The present invention contemplates, in one embodiment, a system for call scheduling that comprises a service switching point (SSP) that communicates with a first telephone station associated with a scheduling party and which receives call schedule information communicated from the first telephone station. In addition, a service node (SN) communicates with the service switching point and is adapted to connect at least one other

telephone station with the first telephone station. A service control point (SCP) communicates with the service switching point and comprises applications for administrative computing and call scheduling. The service control point identifies the service node as adapted to connect the other telephone station(s) with the first telephone station in accordance with the call schedule information. Methods of call scheduling where a service switching point, a plurality of service nodes, and a service control point are also contemplated, as is a method of completing telephone calls according to received call schedule information.

Claims 1 through 25

The office action contends that Morley discloses, inter alia, "a service node (SN, this reads on IP 15, for example, in Fig. 1) communicating with [a] service switching point (SSP 2)". However, in amended claim 1 of the present invention, it is clarified that the service node is adapted to connect the second telephone station with the first telephone station in accordance with the call schedules. In contrast, the IP (intelligent peripherals) in Morley are "[s]pecialized service engines" which provide "dedicated functions" such as the provision of voice prompts, message storage functionality, or specific data storage or programming function." (Morley, column 3, lines 34-43). There is no teaching or suggestion in Morley that these intelligent peripherals in Morley are adapted to connect two telephone stations together. Additionally, claim 1 includes the limitation that the service control point (SCP) identifies the service node (SN) as adapted to connect the at least one other telephone station with the first telephone station in accordance with the call schedules. No such indication that the SCP identifies a service node (or other element) which is adapted to connect two telephone stations is taught or suggested in Morley. In addition, Morley neither teaches nor

suggests a call scheduling application or an administrative computing application present in the service control point. Thus, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2 through 15 are distinguished from Morley.

In addition, dependent claim 3 includes the limitation of the communication of a request from the service control point (SCP) to identify service nodes (SN) that may be used to communicate with the first telephone station. No such identification is taught or suggested in Morley. Similarly, in dependent claim 10, communication of information comprising identified service nodes (SN) that may be used to complete the scheduled call occurs. Again, no such identification is taught or suggested in Morley.

Independent claim 16 includes the limitation of the communication of a request to identify cooperating service nodes (SN) to assist in placing a scheduled call. The service control point (SSP) then cooperates with identified service nodes (SN) to place the scheduled call. This identification of specific service node(s) and then the use of identified specific service node(s) is neither taught nor suggested in Morley. Thus, claim 16 and its dependent claims 17 through 24 are distinguished from Morley.

Specifically, claim 24 includes the limitation that the act of identification of service nodes comprises transmitting corresponding directory numbers. While the Office Action states that this is taught by Morley where customers can input numbers, applicant maintains that these numbers do not correspond to directory numbers for service nodes as claimed.

Similarly to claims 1 and 16, independent claim 25 includes the limitation that the service control point (SCP) identifies service nodes (SN) for use to place the scheduled call. These identified service nodes (SN) are then used in placing the scheduled call. Again, this

limitation is neither taught nor suggested in Morley, and therefore claim 25 is distinguished from Morley.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Morley is believed proper and respectfully solicited.

Claims 12, 26, 27, and 29

The present invention contemplates that a scheduled call may be confirmed via a confirmation call to a number specified during call set up. Claim 12 specifies that a confirmation call is placed "to an alternate telephone station associated with said scheduling party." Claim 26, as amended, includes the limitation that among the call scheduling information is a second telephone number at which a confirmation call should be placed.

Morley discusses dialed digits from "customer's line 3" and the identity of this customer's line is transmitted to the service control point. (Morley, column 3, lines 53-60). When a confirmation call is made, a call is made to the "customer's line 3". (Morley, column 4, lines 38-39). The Office Action, with respect to claims 28 and 29, directs applicant's attention to column 5 of Morley, lines 8-10. However, this section of Morley merely refers back to Figures 4 and 5. Figure 4 is discussed in the sections of Morley which suggest a call to the customer's original line, and Figure 5 does not specifically teach or suggest anything related to confirmation calls. Thus, there is no teaching or suggestion in Morley that any other destination is possible for the confirmation call.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 12, 26, 27, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Morley is believed proper and respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner cannot allow the present application for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney, Sharon Fenick, at (215) 557-5967, to discuss resolution of any remaining issues.

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